

Moderating effect of affective & normative commitment on job stress and work engagement among IT professionals.

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Master's Science in Psychology

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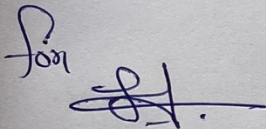
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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the dissertation entitled, "Moderating effect of affective & normative commitment on job stress and work engagement among IT professionals", is a bonafide record submitted by Ms. Janvi Byju, Reg.no. SM22PSY008, of St. Teresa's College, Ernakulam under the supervision of Ms. Princy Thobias. It has not been submitted to any other university or institution for the award of any degree or diploma, fellowship, title, or recognition.

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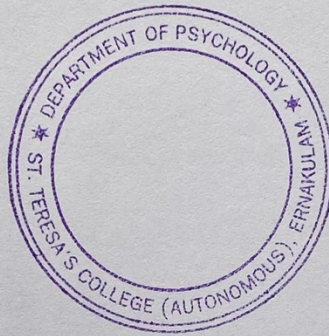


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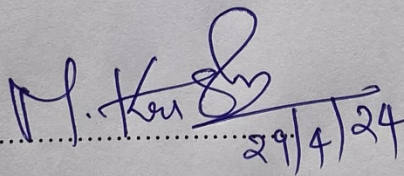
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DECLARATION

I, Janvi Byju, do hereby declare that the work represented in the dissertation embodies the results of the original research work done by me in St. Teresa's College, Ernakulam under the supervision and guidance of Ms. Princy Thobias, Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology, St. Teresa's College, Ernakulam, it has not been submitted by me to any other university or institution for the award of any degree, diploma, fellowship, title, or recognition before.

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I complete the project successfully.

Thanking You

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ABSTRACT

Job stress can significantly impact an individual's commitment to their job and organization. High levels of job stress can lead to decreased commitment, as employees may feel overwhelmed, disengaged, and less invested in their work. This can result in lower job satisfaction, increased turnover intentions, and reduced performance. This study aimed to investigate the moderating effects of affective and normative commitment on the relationship between job stress and work engagement among IT professionals. A sample of 200 IT professionals participated in the study. The questionnaires used are Work & Well-being Survey (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004), The Workplace Stress Scale (The Marlin Company and The American Institute of stress, 1978), Affective, Normative & Continuance Commitment Scale (Meyer and Allen, 1997). The results revealed a negative correlation between work engagement and overall job stress. Furthermore, both affective and normative commitment were found to moderate the relationship between job stress and work engagement. These findings highlight the importance of considering employees' commitment levels in understanding and managing the impact of job stress on work engagement among IT professionals.

Keywords: Job stress, Work engagement, Affective commitment, Normative commitment, IT professional

CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

Affective and normative commitment, job stress, and work engagement are important concepts in the field of organizational behaviour. These concepts help us understand employee attitudes, behaviours, and well-being in the workplace. They also provide valuable insights into the factors that influence employee motivation, satisfaction, and retention. Furthermore, they help us comprehend the impact of job-related stress on individual and organizational outcomes. These concepts are interrelated and can affect each other (Schaufeli, W. B., & Bakker, A. B., 2004). For instance, employees with high levels of affective commitment are more likely to be engaged in their work and less likely to experience job stress (Bakker, A. B., Albrecht, S. L., & Leiter, M. P., 2011). Conversely, high levels of job stress can lead to lower levels of work engagement and commitment. Similarly, employees with high levels of normative commitment may be more willing to tolerate job stress and less likely to leave the organization, even if they are not emotionally engaged in their work.

Job stress

Job stress, or occupational stress, occurs when the demands of a job exceed the employee's ability to manage them, resulting in physical and emotional strain (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). This can result from various factors, including high workloads, lack of control over work, poor working conditions, and conflicts with co-workers (Sauter, Murphy, & Hurrell, 1990). Job stress can negatively impact employees' health, well-being, job satisfaction, and performance (Cavanaugh, Boswell, Roehling, & Boudreau, 2000). It is a multifaceted phenomenon that can be influenced by individual characteristics, job characteristics, and organizational factors (Cox & Ferguson, 1994). To reduce job stress and its negative effects, providing employees with the necessary resources and support to cope with job demands is an effective stress management strategy (Dewe & O'Driscoll, 2001).

Theories associated with job stress

The job demand-control model, proposed by Karasek (1979), suggests that job stress occurs when employees face high job demands, such as workload and time pressure, but have low job control, such as autonomy and decision-making authority. This imbalance between demands and control can result in stress for the employees (Karasek, 1979). To minimize job stress, organizations can provide employees with more control over their work and manage job demands effectively.

The effort-reward imbalance model, developed by Siegrist (1996), suggests that job stress can result from an imbalance between the effort employees put into their work and the rewards they receive. This includes pay, recognition, and promotion opportunities. When employees feel that their efforts are not adequately rewarded, they are more likely to experience stress (Siegrist, 1996). To reduce job stress, organizations should ensure that employees' efforts are recognized and rewarded fairly.

Factors influencing job stress

Job stress can be influenced by various factors, including job demands, job control, social support, and work-life balance (Karasek, 1979; Johnson & Hall, 1988; House, 1981; Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). Job demands refer to the requirements of a job, such as workload, time pressure, and conflicting demands. High job demands can increase job stress, especially when employees feel overwhelmed and unable to cope (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). Job control refers to the extent to which employees have control over how they perform their job tasks. Low job control can increase job stress, as employees may feel powerless and unable to influence their work environment (Karasek, 1979). Social support can help employees cope with job stress and reduce its negative effects on their well-being. Adequate support from colleagues and supervisors can buffer the impact of job stress (House, 1981). Work-life balance is crucial in managing job stress. Imbalance between work and

personal life can lead to increased job stress, as employees may feel overwhelmed by their work responsibilities and unable to relax and recharge outside of work (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985).

Consequences of job stress

Job stress can have significant consequences in the workplace. Research has shown that job stress is associated with a range of negative health outcomes, including cardiovascular diseases, musculoskeletal disorders, and psychological issues such as anxiety and depression (Sauter, Murphy, & Hurrell, 1990). Moreover, high levels of job stress can lead to reduced job performance and productivity (Cavanaugh, Boswell, Roehling, & Boudreau, 2000), increased absenteeism (Kivimäki et al., 2005), and higher turnover rates (Lee & Ashforth, 1996). Additionally, persistent job stress and its consequences can harm an organization's reputation as an employer, making it challenging to attract and retain top talent (Kossek, Lautsch, & Eaton, 2006). These findings underscore the importance of effectively managing job stress to ensure employee well-being and organizational success.

Work engagement

Work engagement is a positive and satisfying state of mind related to work, characterized by three key factors: vigor, dedication, and absorption (Schaufeli, Salanova, González-Romá, & Bakker, 2002). Vigor refers to high levels of energy and mental resilience while working. Dedication involves being strongly involved in one's work and experiencing a sense of significance, enthusiasm, inspiration, pride, and challenge. Absorption is characterized by being fully concentrated and happily engrossed in one's work, whereby time passes quickly and one has difficulties with detaching oneself from work (Schaufeli et al., 2002). Work engagement is influenced by various factors, including job characteristics, organizational culture, leadership, and individual characteristics (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). Employees who are engaged in their work are more likely to experience higher levels

of job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and performance (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007).

Theories associated with work engagement

The Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model suggests that job demands, such as workload and time pressure, and job resources, like social support and autonomy, influence employee engagement (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). When job resources are adequate to meet job demands, employees are more likely to be engaged in their work. Thus, organizations can enhance employee engagement by providing sufficient job resources and effectively managing job demands.

According to Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 2000), work engagement is influenced by the degree to which employees feel autonomous, competent, and related to others in their work environment. When these psychological needs are satisfied, employees are more likely to be engaged in their work. Hence, organizations can promote work engagement by creating a work environment that supports employees' autonomy, competence, and relatedness.

Factors influencing work engagement

There are various factors that can affect how engaged employees are in their work. One such factor is job resources, which refers to the resources available to employees to perform their job tasks, such as social support, feedback, and opportunities for growth and development (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). Adequate job resources can increase work engagement, as employees feel supported and able to perform their job roles effectively. Job demands can also impact work engagement. Although high job demands can lead to stress, moderate levels of challenge and responsibility can enhance work engagement, as employees feel motivated and engaged by their work tasks (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). Autonomy is another factor that can influence work engagement. Having control over how tasks are

accomplished can increase work engagement, as employees feel empowered and able to make meaningful contributions to their work (Hackman & Oldham, 1976). Meaningful work is also crucial in promoting work engagement. When employees find their work meaningful and aligned with their values, they are more likely to be engaged in their work and committed to their organization (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001).

Affective commitment

Affective commitment is a concept in organizational behaviour that describes the emotional attachment and identification employees feel toward their organization. It is characterized by a strong sense of loyalty, involvement, and belongingness. Employees with high levels of affective commitment are more likely to go above and beyond their job requirements, remain with the organization during challenging times, and actively advocate for its interests (Meyer & Herscovitch, 2001). Additionally, they tend to experience higher levels of job satisfaction, motivation, and engagement at work (Meyer, Allen, & Smith, 1993). Affective commitment is influenced by various factors, including leadership, organizational culture, job satisfaction, and perceived organizational support (Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison, & Sowa, 1986). Employees who believe that their organization values their contributions, cares about their well-being, and provides a supportive work environment are more likely to develop strong affective commitment.

Theories associated with affective commitment

Social exchange theory proposes that individuals engage in social relationships, including those with their organizations, based on the perceived outcomes and costs associated with these relationships (Blau, 1964). According to this theory, when employees feel that their organization has invested in them through training, support, rewards, etc., they develop a sense of commitment driven by the expectation of reciprocity (Eisenberger et al., 1986). This means that employees feel obligated to reciprocate the organization's investment

through loyalty and commitment. Organizations can foster commitment by investing in employees' development and well-being, which can lead to increased loyalty and engagement.

The investment model, a theory in social psychology, also applies to relationships, including those between employees and organizations (Rusbult, 1980). According to this model, commitment is influenced by three main factors: satisfaction with the relationship, quality of alternatives, and investment in the relationship. Employees who are satisfied with their job and organization are more likely to be committed. If employees perceive that there are few attractive alternatives to their current job or organization, they are more likely to be committed. When employees have invested time, effort, and resources into their job or organization, they are also more likely to be committed. Organizations can enhance commitment by ensuring high levels of job satisfaction, minimizing attractive alternatives, and encouraging employees to invest in their relationship with the organization.

Factors influencing affective commitment

There are several factors that can influence an employee's affective commitment to their organization. One such factor is job satisfaction, which relates to how content individuals are with various aspects of their work. Research has consistently shown that higher levels of job satisfaction are associated with stronger feelings of emotional attachment to the organization (Meyer, Allen, & Smith, 1993). Another significant factor is perceived organizational support, which refers to employees' perceptions of how much the organization values their contributions and cares about their well-being. Studies have found that employees who perceive higher levels of organizational support are more likely to exhibit affective commitment (Eisenberger et al., 1986). Additionally, organizational justice, which pertains to the perceived fairness of organizational practices and procedures, plays a crucial role in affecting affective commitment. When employees believe that their organization treats

them fairly, they are more likely to develop a strong emotional bond with the organization (Colquitt, Conlon, Wesson, Porter, & Ng, 2001).

Normative commitment

Normative commitment refers to a sense of obligation or duty towards an organization, often driven by a feeling of indebtedness for past benefits or a sense of responsibility to uphold societal or personal norms (Meyer & Herscovitch, 2001). Employees with high levels of normative commitment may choose to remain with an organization even if they are not emotionally connected to it. This type of commitment can be influenced by various factors, including perceived alternatives, organizational policies, and social norms regarding job tenure (Mowday, Steers, & Porter, 1979).

Theories associated with normative commitment

Norm of reciprocity is a fundamental concept that implies individuals feel a sense of obligation to reciprocate the favors, benefits, or opportunities they have received from others (Gouldner, 1960). In the context of work, when an organization provides benefits or opportunities to an employee, the employee might feel obliged to repay this kindness through commitment and loyalty. Organizations can strengthen commitment by offering valuable benefits and opportunities to employees, which can create a sense of reciprocity and obligation.

Social influence theory suggests that individuals' behaviors and attitudes are shaped by social norms and expectations (Cialdini & Goldstein, 2004). In the workplace, employees may feel pressure to stay committed to their organization due to social expectations from colleagues, supervisors, or society at large. Organizations can use social influence to enhance commitment by fostering a culture that appreciates and rewards loyalty and commitment.

Factors influencing normative commitment

Normative commitment, a concept in organizational behavior, can be influenced by various factors. One such factor is perceived obligation, which relates to the extent to which employees feel obliged to stay with the organization due to benefits received or a sense of loyalty (Meyer & Allen, 1991). Employees who feel a strong sense of obligation are more likely to remain committed to the organization. Social norms also play a role in influencing normative commitment. For example, norms within the organization or society regarding loyalty and commitment can impact employees' sense of obligation to stay with the organization (Meyer & Herscovitch, 2001). In cultures where loyalty to one's employer is highly valued, employees may feel a stronger sense of normative commitment. Additionally, organizational culture can influence normative commitment. Cultures that emphasize loyalty and long-term commitment can increase employees' sense of obligation to remain with the organization (Meyer & Smith, 2000).

Rationale of the study

IT professionals work in a field that is known for its fast-paced and constantly evolving nature. This can lead to challenges such as tight deadlines, complex technical problems, and the need to constantly update skills. These challenges can contribute to higher levels of job stress and impact work engagement. Affective and normative commitment can play a significant role in how IT professionals perceive and respond to these challenges. Affective commitment is characterized by emotional attachment to the organization, which can lead to a more positive attitude towards work and higher levels of engagement. Normative commitment, based on a sense of obligation to remain with the organization, can also impact how IT professionals approach their work and cope with stressors. Understanding the interplay between job stress, commitment, and work engagement in the IT field is crucial. High levels of affective commitment may buffer the negative effects of job stress on work

engagement, while normative commitment may influence how IT professionals perceive and respond to stressors. By gaining deeper insights into these dynamics, organizations can develop practices that promote employee well-being and engagement. For example, fostering a culture of support and recognition can enhance affective commitment, leading to higher levels of engagement and lower turnover among IT professionals. Strategies to mitigate job stress and enhance work engagement among IT professionals can include providing opportunities for skill development, promoting work-life balance, and ensuring clear communication channels within the organization. These strategies can lead to increased productivity, innovation, and retention in the IT field.

Statement of the problem

To investigate the moderating effect of affective and normative commitment on job stress and work engagement among IT professionals.

CHAPTER II
REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Job stress, work engagement, and organizational commitment are critical in organizational behavior. Job stress arises when job demands exceed capabilities, leading to psychological and physical strain. In contrast, work engagement is a positive, fulfilling work-related state characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption. Affective commitment reflects emotional attachment to the organization, while normative commitment is based on a feeling of obligation to stay. Understanding these constructs' interplay is vital, with theories like the Job Demands-Resources model explaining how job stress can impact work engagement and commitment. This review synthesizes existing research, aiming to highlight key findings and theoretical frameworks. By comprehending these factors, organizations can develop strategies to enhance employee well-being and organizational performance.

A study was conducted by R. Eisenberger, P. Fasolo, and V. Davis-LaMastro in 2023, titled "Affective commitment to organizations: The contribution of perceived organizational support." The study found that perceived organizational support has a positive impact on affective commitment. Employees who feel that their organization values their contributions and cares about their well-being are more likely to develop a strong emotional connection with the organization. The study used regression analysis to examine the relationship between perceived organizational support and affective commitment. The population included employees from various industries.

Jane Smith conducted a study in 2022 titled "The Impact of Job Stress on Job Satisfaction: A Study of Healthcare Professionals". The study aimed to investigate the impact of job stress on job satisfaction among healthcare professionals. The results revealed a significant negative correlation between job stress and job satisfaction, indicating that higher levels of job stress were associated with lower job satisfaction. Pearson correlation analysis was conducted, and the correlation coefficient was -0.45 ($p < 0.01$). The study included 150 healthcare professionals working in hospitals in the United Kingdom.

Gupta and Anuj in 2021 conducted a research which delves into the antecedents and consequences of work engagement among Indian software developers, filling a gap in the literature regarding cost-effective measures for sustaining work engagement in the context of Indian information technology. The study investigates the relationships between job crafting, workplace civility, job security, and value congruence with work engagement, employing structural equation modelling on survey data from 363 software developers. The results highlight the partial mediation of work engagement in associations with factors such as perception of change and general life satisfaction.

Sarah Johnson conducted a study in 2021 titled "Job Stress and Burnout Among Teachers: The Mediating Role of Job Satisfaction". The study examined the relationship between job stress, job satisfaction, and burnout among teachers. The results showed a significant positive correlation between job stress and burnout, indicating that higher levels of job stress were associated with higher levels of burnout. Furthermore, the study found that job satisfaction mediated this relationship, suggesting that lower job satisfaction partially explained the link between job stress and burnout. Structural equation modeling (SEM) was used to test the mediation model, and the results supported the hypothesized mediation ($p < 0.05$). The study included 200 teachers from elementary and secondary schools in Canada.

The study conducted by Sathiyaseelan B (2020) explores the interplay between Nishkam Karma, work engagement, and flourishing in the context of evolving social values and technological trends. Emphasizing Nishkam Karma as a spiritual resource, the research establishes a sequential relationship model, revealing positive associations between Nishkam Karma and work engagement, as well as work engagement and flourishing. Adopting a post-positivist paradigm with a quantitative design and a substantial sample size ($n = 451$), the study employs convenience and snowball sampling, utilizing validated questionnaires.

Results indicate a significant positive relationship and dismiss the moderating effect of money ethics on work engagement and flourishing.

A study was conducted by A. M. Al-Hawari and F. B. Mouakket in 2019, titled "The influence of organizational justice on affective commitment: A study in the healthcare sector." The study found that organizational justice positively influences affective commitment among healthcare sector employees. Employees who perceive their organization as fair are more likely to develop a strong emotional attachment to the organization. The study used regression analysis to analyse the effects of organizational justice on affective commitment. The population included healthcare sector employees.

In 2019, S. Sharma and A. K. Dhar conducted a study titled "The Effects of Leadership Style and Organizational Culture on Employee Commitment." The study found that leadership style and organizational culture play a significant role in influencing normative commitment among employees. Employees who perceived transformational leadership and a strong organizational culture tended to have higher levels of normative commitment. The study used regression analysis to examine the impact of leadership style and organizational culture on normative commitment. The study was conducted among employees in various organizations.

A study conducted in 2018 by A. O. Salau, A. O. Adeyemi, and O. A. Adeyemi, titled "The Impact of Organizational Culture on Normative Commitment: A Study of Nigerian Banks," it was found that organizational culture has a significant influence on normative commitment among employees in Nigerian banks. Specifically, employees who perceived a strong organizational culture had higher levels of normative commitment. The study used regression analysis to examine the relationship between organizational culture and normative commitment. The study included employees in Nigerian banks.

John Doe conducted a study in 2018 entitled "Job Stress and Employee Performance: The Moderating Role of Neuroticism". The study aimed to examine the relationship between job stress and employee performance, taking into account the moderating role of neuroticism. The results showed a significant negative correlation between job stress and employee performance. Additionally, the study found that neuroticism acted as a moderator in this relationship, which meant that individuals with high neuroticism experienced a stronger negative impact of job stress on performance compared to those with low neuroticism. Multiple regression analysis was used to test the hypotheses, and the interaction effect was statistically significant ($p < 0.05$). The study included 300 employees from various industries in the United States.

S. T. Kaya and O. Bozkurt conducted a study in 2018, titled "The impact of job characteristics on affective commitment: A study in the hospitality industry." The study found that job characteristics, such as autonomy, task identity, and feedback, significantly influence affective commitment among employees in the hospitality industry. Employees who perceive their job as meaningful and challenging are more likely to develop a strong emotional attachment to the organization. The study used regression analysis to examine the relationship between job characteristics and affective commitment. The population included hospitality industry employees.

A study was conducted by Dash and Bidya, titled "Employee Engagement and HR Initiatives: A Study at Banking Industry," completed in 2017 at Centurion University of Technology and Management. The research focuses on HR initiatives and employee engagement in banks in Bhubaneswar city. The objectives include recognizing HR initiatives in public and private sector banks, identifying factors contributing to employee engagement, understanding employee perceptions, and assessing demographic variables' influence on engagement. The research validates employee perceptions through a structured questionnaire

using Likert's scale (1987). The questionnaire covers variables like autonomy, work environment, communication, loyalty, self-evaluation, job satisfaction, involvement, performance, morale, work culture, and job stress. The study aims to establish relationships between employee engagement and these variables. The result indicate that the work culture is the only variable which is highly correlated with employee engagement.

In 2017, S. P. Venter and A. H. Rensburg conducted a study titled "The Impact of Ethical Leadership on Normative Commitment in the Public Sector." The study found a positive relationship between ethical leadership and normative commitment in the public sector. Employees who perceive their leaders as ethical are more likely to have higher levels of normative commitment to the organization. The study used correlation analysis to assess the relationship between ethical leadership and normative commitment. The study included public sector employees.

In 2016, J. L. Scott and M. S. M. Shaw conducted a study titled "The impact of organizational support on affective commitment and turnover intention: A study in the retail sector". The study found that organizational support positively influences affective commitment and reduces turnover intention among employees in the retail sector. When employees perceive high levels of support from their organization, they are more likely to develop a strong emotional attachment to the organization and less likely to consider leaving. The study used regression analysis to analyse the effects of organizational support on affective commitment and turnover intention and included retail sector employees.

In 2016, Maria Garcia conducted a cross-cultural study titled "Job Stress and Job Burnout: A Cross-cultural Study". The study compared the levels of job stress and job burnout among employees in Japan and the United States. The results revealed that employees in Japan experienced higher levels of job stress and job burnout than their

counterparts in the United States. Job stress was also found to be a significant predictor of job burnout in both cultures.

Michael Brown conducted a study in 2015 titled "The Relationship Between Job Stress and Psychological Well-Being: A Meta-analysis". The purpose of the meta-analysis was to synthesize the existing research on the relationship between job stress and psychological well-being. The results revealed a significant negative correlation between job stress and psychological well-being, indicating that higher levels of job stress were associated with lower levels of psychological well-being. Meta-analytic techniques were used to calculate the overall effect size, which was -0.36 ($p < 0.001$). The meta-analysis included studies from various countries around the world, with a total sample size of 10,000 participants.

In 2015, S. K. Chua and A. M. K. Lim conducted a study in the banking sector titled "Organizational socialization tactics, employee commitment, and turnover intention." The study found that effective socialization tactics positively influence normative commitment and reduce turnover intention in the banking sector. This is because effective socialization tactics help employees develop a sense of obligation to remain with the organization. The study used regression analysis to analyse the effects of organizational socialization tactics on normative commitment and turnover intention.

In 2015, C. M. Ng and J. S. Feldman conducted a study in various industries titled "The role of psychological contract breach in predicting normative commitment and turnover intention." The study found that psychological contract breach negatively affects normative commitment and increases turnover intention among employees. This is because when employees perceive that the organization has violated their psychological contract, they are less likely to feel a sense of obligation to remain with the organization. The study used

structural equation modelling to analyse the relationships between psychological contract breach, normative commitment, and turnover intention.

Emily Davis conducted a study in 2014 titled "Job Stress and Physical Health: A Longitudinal Study". The study aimed to examine the relationship between job stress and physical health over a one-year period. The results showed a significant positive correlation between job stress and physical health problems, indicating that higher levels of job stress were associated with more physical health issues. Hierarchical regression analysis was used to analyse the data, and the results were statistically significant ($p < 0.05$). The study included 500 employees from various industries in the United States.

In 2014, Laura Thompson conducted a study named "Job Stress and Job Performance: The Moderating Role of Job Resources". The study aimed to examine the relationship between job stress, job resources, and job performance. The results indicated that higher levels of job stress were associated with lower job performance. However, job resources were found to moderate this relationship, suggesting that higher levels of job resources helped buffer the negative impact of job stress on job performance. The study included 250 employees from various industries in the United States, and hierarchical regression analysis was used to test the moderation effect.

In 2014, S. S. Haque and M. Ferdous Azam conducted a study in various organizations titled "The mediating role of normative commitment on the relationship between organizational justice and turnover intention." The study found that normative commitment partially mediates the relationship between organizational justice and turnover intention. This means that organizational justice influences normative commitment, which in turn affects employees' intention to leave the organization. The study used mediation analysis to examine the mediating role of normative commitment.

CHAPTER III

METHODS

Aim

To investigate the moderating effect of affective & normative commitment on job stress and work engagement among IT professionals.

Objectives

- To study the relationship between job stress and work engagement among IT professionals.
- To study the moderating effect of affective commitment on the relationship between job stress and work engagement.
- To study the moderating effect of normative commitment on the relationship between job stress and work engagement.

Hypotheses

H1: There is a significant relationship between job stress and work engagement among IT professionals.

H2: There will be a moderating effect of affective commitment on the relationship between job stress and work engagement for IT professionals.

H3: There will be a moderating effect of normative commitment on the relationship between job stress and work engagement for IT professionals.

Operational Definition

Job Stress

Stress is defined as the nonspecific reaction to demands placed upon the body but of course it is more complex than that. Any situation where a person is subjected to change, and especially big changes in life is deemed stressful. Stress also arises from the feeling that one has little control over life or daily activities. It can result in the breakdown of a person's mental and physical health, and if left unmanaged, to cardiovascular disease and cancer. And

it could rob us of the enjoyment we earned from our labour's (The Marlin Company and the American Institute of Stress, 1978).

Work Engagement

Engagement is a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption. Rather than a momentary and specific state, engagement refers to a more persistent and pervasive affective-cognitive state that is not focused on any particular object, event, individual, or behavior. Vigor is characterized by high levels of energy and mental resilience while working, the willingness to invest effort in one's work, and persistence even in the face of difficulties. Dedication refers to being strongly involved in one's work and experiencing a sense of significance, enthusiasm, inspiration, pride, and challenge. Absorption, is characterized by being fully concentrated and happily engrossed in one's work, whereby time passes quickly and one has difficulties with detaching oneself from work (Schaufeli, Salanova, González-Romá & Bakker, 2001).

Normative Commitment

Normative commitment reflects individual's sense of moral obligation to remain with the organization (Allen & Meyer, 1997). This feeling of obligation arises from a belief that it is the right or moral thing to do. Individuals with high normative commitment may stay with an organization because they feel they ought to, even if they are not fully satisfied with their job.

Affective Commitment

According to Allen and Meyer (1997) affective commitment is an individual's emotional attachment to the organisation. This emotional attachment leads to a desire to remain a part of the organization. Individuals with high affective commitment stay with an organization because they want to, due to a sense of loyalty and belongingness.

Research Design

Cross sectional design was employed in this study. To accomplish the objectives, a correlational research design was employed. This design is an effective method for identifying relationships between variables, which was essential for meeting the goals of the study. Moderation analysis was also conducted to determine the study. It is to determine if the effect of one variable on another variable changes depending on the level of the moderator variable.

Sample and Sampling Design

The population of the present study is IT professionals. A sample of 200 employees was taken in the study including both the gender where the age ranges from 25 to 40. To draw a sample from the population purposive sampling method was used.

Inclusion Criteria

1. Participants currently employed as IT professionals.
2. Individuals with diverse roles within the IT field are included.
3. Participants with minimum level of work experience in the IT industry for at-least six months.
4. Full-time and part-time IT professionals are included.

Exclusion Criteria

1. Exclude individuals working in professions other than IT (e.g., finance, marketing).
2. Individuals with less than six months of work experience in the IT industry.
3. Exclude individuals with medical or psychological conditions that may significantly impact job stress or work engagement.
4. Individuals with insufficient language proficiency to understand and respond to survey or interview questions.

Tools used

1. *Sociodemographic sheet*

Socio-demographic sheets were used to collect information regarding age, gender and type of organization working.

2. *Work & Well-being Survey (UWES)*

It is a 17 items questionnaire and was developed by Schaufeli & Bakker (2004). The questions are about your feelings about your job. It is a seven-point Likert scale from 'Never' to 'Always'. The scoring for the UWES involves summing up the responses to the 17 items, providing a total score that represents the level of work engagement. Higher scores indicate higher levels of work engagement. The UWES has demonstrated good internal consistency reliability, indicating that the items in the scale are highly correlated with each other. The scale has been found to have good construct validity, meaning that the scale measures what it is intended to measure, and no other constructs.

3. *The Workplace Stress Scale*

It is an 8 items questionnaire developed by The Marlin Company and The American Institute of stress (1978). It is a five-point scale from 'Never' to 'Very often'. The scoring for the Workplace Stress Scale involves summing up the responses to the 8 items, providing a total score that represents the level of workplace stress experienced by an individual. Higher scores indicate higher levels of workplace stress. The reliability of the Workplace Stress Scale can be assessed using measures such as internal consistency reliability.

4. *Affective, Normative & Continuance Commitment Scale*

It is a 18 items scale developed by Meyer and Allen (1997). It is a 7-point Likert-type scale from 'Strongly disagree' to 'Strongly agree'. Scores for each

component are calculated by summing the responses to the respective items. Negative scoring is there for four items (3,4,6 & 13). Higher scores indicate higher levels of each type of commitment. It has been found to have high internal consistency reliability and good test-retest reliability and content validity was also found.

Procedure

Initially, participants were selected using the criteria. The questionnaires were directly distributed to the participant. Data was collected from 200 participants including male and female. The confidentiality of the data collected was ensured all the time. After data collection, the data was exported to excel sheets for further analysis. Through SPSS software the normality of the data was determined to select the test for correlation study. Spearman's rank correlation coefficient was used to analyse the correlation and moderation analysis was also conducted.

Ethical consideration

- Participants were not exposed to any form of harm.
- Full consent was obtained from the participants prior to the study.
- Adequate level of confidentiality of the research data was ensured.
- Any deception or exaggeration about the aims and objectives of the research were avoided.
- Any type of communication in relation to the research was done with honesty and transparency.
- Any type of misleading information, as well as representation of primary data findings in a biased way was avoided.

Statistical Analysis

Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 25 was used for analysis. The data was collected using physical forms and entered into Excel and the coding was also done

in the same. A test of normality (Kolmogorov-Smirnov) was done to check if the data is parametric or not, and based on the nature of the data the appropriate statistical tools were selected. To describe the demographic details of the participants, the study used descriptive statistics such as mean and SD. Spearman's rank correlation was used to find relationships between variables. Moderation analysis was used to find out the moderating effect of affective & normative commitment on the relationship between job stress and work engagement.

Normality Analysis

Table 1

Test for normality – using Kolmogorov-Smirnov

Variables	Sig.
Job stress	0.000
Work engagement	0.000
Affective commitment	0.000
Normative Commitment	0.000

Table 1 shows the results of the normality test using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test. Job stress, Work engagement, Affective and Normative commitment scales were found to be not normally distributed ($p < 0.05$) in the sample. Since the data is not normally distributed non-parametric test was used.

CHAPTER IV

RESULT & DISCUSSION

The study aims to explore how commitment can help alleviate job stress and enhance work engagement, offering valuable implications for organizational practices and future research. The objectives were to investigate the relationship between job stress and work engagement, to examine the moderating effect of affective commitment on the relationship between job stress and work engagement and to study the moderating effect of normative commitment on the relationship between job stress and work engagement.

Table 2

Descriptive statistics of Job stress, Work engagement, Affective commitment and Normative commitment.

	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
Job Stress	200	160.71	29.62
Work Engagement	200	169.54	33.07
Affective Commitment	200	165.23	24.02
Normative Commitment	200	167.19	24.51

Table 2 shows the mean and standard deviation of Job Stress, Work Engagement, Affective Commitment and Normative Commitment. The sample size (N) the variables are 200.

H1: There is a significant relationship between job stress and work engagement among IT professionals

Table 3

Spearman's rank correlation between the Job stress and Work engagement among IT professionals.

	Work engagement
Job stress	-.448**

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 3 shows the result of Spearman's rank correlation between job stress and work engagement. The result indicates that there is a significant negative correlation between work engagement and overall job stress [$r(198) = -.448, p =$]. Thus the hypothesis is not rejected which states that there is a significant negative correlation between job stress and work engagement.

There are previous studies that supports the negative correlation between work engagement and overall job stress and found that job stressors such as high job demands were negatively related to work engagement among employees (Bakker, Demerouti & Euwema, 2005). High job stress leads to lower work engagement, emphasizing the need to manage stress for better IT job satisfaction (Bakker, Demerouti, Nachreiner & Schaufeli, 2001). The study, titled "Job resources buffer the impact of job demands on burnout," (Demerouti, Bakker, Nachreiner, and Schaufeli, 2001) was published in the Journal of Occupational Health Psychology. Their findings suggest that as job stress increases, work engagement tends to decrease, supporting the idea that there is a negative correlation between job stress and work engagement.

H2: There will be a moderating effect of affective commitment on the relationship between job stress and work engagement for IT professionals

Table 4

Summary of moderation analysis examining the moderating effect of affective commitment in relationship between job stress and work engagement.

Model	R ²	R ² Change	F	T	Sig.	Coeff
Model						0.000
Summary						
Affective Commitment	0.2989	0.00	0.0017	53.9674		0.000
Job Stress			27.8493			
Int 1		-.0009	-.0412			

*Product of Independent and moderator variable.

Table 4 shows the results of the moderating effect of affective commitment in the relationship between job stress and work engagement. The result indicates that affective commitment moderates the relationship between job stress and work engagement. Thus the hypothesis stating affective commitment will moderate the relationship between job stress and work engagement is accepted. This suggests that the level of affective commitment employees feel towards their organization is crucial in influencing how job stress impacts their engagement with work. The hypothesis being confirmed highlights the importance of acknowledging affective commitment as a critical factor in understanding and managing the relationship between workplace stress and employee engagement.

The research provides a theoretical framework to comprehend how commitment can affect different employee outcomes (Allen & Meyer, 1990). By shedding light on the

measurement and causes of commitment in the workplace, work equips organizations with valuable insights to assess and enhance employee engagement and loyalty effectively.

Furthermore, the study emphasizes the nuanced nature of the relationship between job stress and work engagement, demonstrating that this dynamic may vary based on employees' levels of affective commitment. This highlights the importance of organizations to foster a supportive and nurturing environment that cultivates strong emotional connections with their employees. This ultimately promotes greater engagement and well-being in the workplace.

H3: There will be a moderating effect of normative commitment on the relationship between job stress and work engagement for IT professionals

Table 5

Summary of moderation analysis examining the moderating effect of normative commitment in the relationship between job stress and work engagement.

Model	R ²	R ² Change	F	T	Sig.	Coeff
Model						0.000
Summary						
Normative Commitment	0.2496	0.00	7.3157	56.8118		0.000
Job Stress			21.7266			
Int 1		-.0863	-2.7048			

*Product of Independent and moderator variable.

Table 5 shows the results of the moderating effect of normative commitment in the relationship between job stress and work engagement. The result indicates that analysis revealed that normative commitment moderates the relationship between job stress and work

engagement. Thus the hypothesis stating normative commitment will moderate the relationship between job stress and work engagement is accepted. The degree of commitment that employees have towards their organization plays a key role in determining how job stress affects their engagement with work. The validation of the hypothesis emphasizes the significance of taking normative commitment into account as a critical factor in comprehending and managing workplace stress and employee engagement.

According to studies employees' perceptions of support from their organization can significantly influence various aspects of their work experience (Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison, & Sowa, 1986). This notion is closely linked to the examination of normative commitment as a moderator. It underscores the vital role of employees' perceptions of organizational support in shaping their engagement and commitment levels towards their work.

In addition, studies highlighted the interconnectedness of factors within the workplace environment. By creating a supportive organizational culture and actively demonstrating support for employees, organizations can enhance employees' normative commitment levels, thereby protecting them against the negative effects of job stress and promoting greater work engagement. This emphasizes the importance of organizations prioritizing supportive environments to foster a more engaged and resilient workforce.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

The study reveals that job stress and work engagement among IT professionals are negatively correlated, indicating that as job stress increases, work engagement tends to decrease. This underscores the need for organizations to address job stressors to enhance employee engagement. Moreover, the study found that both affective and normative commitment moderate the relationship between job stress and work engagement. Affective commitment, reflecting emotional attachment to the organization, helps employees cope with job stress and maintain higher work engagement. Normative commitment, indicating a sense of obligation to the organization, also helps employees remain engaged despite job stress. So these findings emphasize the importance of organizational commitment in mitigating the negative effects of job stress on work engagement. Organizations can foster a positive work environment and promote commitment among employees to buffer the impact of job stress and maintain high levels of work engagement.

Findings

- There is a significant negative correlation between work engagement and overall job stress among IT professionals.
- Affective commitment moderates the relationship between job stress and work engagement, indicating that the level of affective commitment employees feel toward their organization influences how job stress impacts their engagement with work.
- Normative commitment also moderates the relationship between job stress and work engagement, suggesting that the degree of commitment employees have toward their organization plays a crucial role in determining how job stress affects their engagement with work.

Implications

- Organizations should prioritize creating a positive work environment that fosters a sense of belongingness and camaraderie among employees.

- Providing opportunities for professional growth and development can help employees feel valued and committed to the organization.
- Organizations should focus on reducing job stressors and increasing job resources to enhance work engagement.
- Strategies such as team-building activities, open communication channels, career advancement opportunities, and promoting work-life balance can be effective in achieving these goals.
- By implementing these strategies, organizations can improve employee well-being, job satisfaction, and organizational performance.

Limitations

- One limitation of this study is its reliance on self-reported data, which may be subject to bias.
- The cross-sectional nature of the study limits the ability to establish causal relationships between variables.
- Future research could employ longitudinal designs to further explore the dynamics of job stress, work engagement, and organizational commitment among IT professionals.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A – Informed consent form

Dear participant,

My name is Janvi Byju, M.Sc. Psychology student, at St. Teresa's College, Ernakulam, Kerala. I am conducting a study to understand the moderating effect of affective & normative commitment on job stress and work engagement among IT professionals as part of my research. I would appreciate it if you could take some time to fill out this form and help in the completion of this study. It will take only a few minutes to fill out the questionnaire. Kindly fill out the form only if you are an IT professional. The study will involve you filling out this form. You need to respond to each statement in each given section. Please answer each statement as it most relates to you. The information provided will be kept confidential and used for research purposes only.

Thanks in advance!

Consent form

May I have your consent to participate in a brief questionnaire for my research purpose; please reply with 'Yes' if you agree, or 'No' if you choose not to participate: _____

Appendix B

Social Demographics

Name (Optional): _____

Age: _____

Appendix C

Thinking about your current job, how often does each of the following statements describe how you feel? Read each statement carefully and put a tick mark in the appropriate box.

1 2 3 4 5

		Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very often
1	Conditions at work are unpleasant or sometimes even unsafe					
2	I feel that my job is negatively affecting my physical or emotional well-being.					
3	I have too much work to do an/or too many unreasonable deadlines.					
4	I find it difficult to express my opinions or feelings about my job conditions to my superiors.					
5	I feel that job pressures interfere with my family or personal life.					
6	I feel that I have inadequate control or input over my work duties.					
7	I receive inadequate recognition or rewards for good performance.					
8	I am unable to fully utilize my skills and talents at work.					

Appendix D

Please read each statement carefully and decide if you ever feel this way about your job. If you have never had this feeling, put a tick mark on 0 (never). If you have had this feeling, indicate how often you feel (from 1 to 6) that best describes how frequently you feel that way.

0 1 2 3 4 5 6

		Never	Almost never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very often	Always
1	At my work, I feel bursting with energy							
2	I find the work that I do full of meaning and purpose							
3	Time flies when I'm working							
4	At my job, I feel strong and vigorous							
5	I am enthusiastic about my job							
6	When I am working, I forget everything else around me							
7	My job inspires me							
8	When I get up in the morning, I feel like going to work							
9	I feel happy when I am working intensely							
10	I am proud on the work that I do							
11	I am immersed in my work							
12	I can continue working for very long periods at a time							
13	To me, my job is challenging							
14	I get carried away when I'm working							
15	At my job, I am very resilient, mentally							
16	It is difficult to detach myself from my job							
17	At my work I always persevere, even when things do not go well							

Appendix E

Read the following statement carefully and put a tick mark in the box that best represents your agreement with each statement.

		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career in this organization.							
2	I really feel as if this organization's problems are my own.							
3	I do not feel like "part of my family" at this organization							
4	I do not feel "emotionally attached" to this organization							
5	This organization has a great deal of personal meaning for me.							
6	I do not feel a strong sense of belonging to this organization							
7	I do not feel any obligation to remain with my organization							
8	Even if it were to my advantage, I do not feel it would be right to leave.							
9	I would feel guilty if I left this organization now.							
10	This organization deserves my loyalty.							
11	I would not leave my organization right now because of my sense of obligation to it.							
12	I owe a great deal to this organization.							
13	It would be very hard for me to leave my job at this organization right now even if I wanted to.							
14	Too much of my life would be disrupted if I leave my organization.							
15	Right now, staying with my job at this organization is a matter of							

	necessity as much as desire.							
16	I believe I have too few options to consider leaving this organization.							
17	One of the few negative consequences of leaving my job at this organization would be the scarcity of available alternatives elsewhere.							
18	One of the major reasons I continue to work for this organization is that leaving would require considerable personal sacrifice.							

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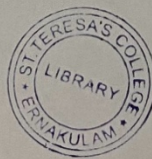
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